

Date: January 2002

To: National Wilderness Steering Committee,
Members and Liaison.

From: Wilderness Program Manager

Subject: Notes From the National Wilderness Steering Committee Meeting
October 16-17, 2001, Santa Fe, NM

The following information summarizes issues, decisions, and assignments stemming from the 11th meeting of the National Wilderness Steering Committee (NWSC) meeting held at the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, New Mexico October 16-17, 2001. These notes follow the NWSC meeting agenda issued October 3, 2001 and are based upon minutes and a review by members present. Some updates have been added due to the lateness in posting the report.

Tuesday, October 16, 2001

In Attendance:

Standing: Denis Davis, Dave Graber, Wes Henry, Dave Morris, Don Neubacher (Chairperson), Don Sharlow, Bob Seibert, Gary Somers, Dave Spirtes, Chris Stein, Steve Ulvi, Jim Walters. **Absent:** Dick Ring

Liaison: Rick Potts (for) Director, Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center. Dave Parsons, Director, Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute. Bill Schmidt, WASO, Natural Resources Stewardship and Science. **Absent:** Marti Leister, Associate Director, Operations, PWRO

Guests: Doug Scott, Policy Director, Pew Wilderness Center. Rich Harris, WASO, GPRA Office.

1. Welcome and Introductory Comments: Chairperson (D Neubacher).

The Chairperson conducted brief introductions and emphasized working nature of the meeting. He then asked Jim Walters to review logistical information for meeting including transportation for field trip to Bandelier National Monument (October 17), arrangements for lunches, etc.

2. Status Reports from the NPS Wilderness Program Manager (W. Henry)

Wilderness Education Subcommittee: The NPS Wilderness Education Plan has completed several field reviews and is currently pending approval by the Associate Director, Operations and Education. [Associate Director Ring has subsequently requested a quick final review by Associate Regional Directors for Operations; the current version can be viewed at the following site: www.nature.nps.gov/wilderness]. After exploring options for printing the document, the Program Manager will send two approved copies to each wilderness park (one copy each for the park superintendent and Chief of Interpretation) and to Harpers Ferry interpretive planners [150-200 copies]. Chris Stein recommended that the Wilderness Education Plan be folded into the Chiefs of Interpretation Meeting agendas, introduced to subject matter specialists at HAFE to be considered in long-range interpretive planning, and taken to appropriate national and regional interpretive conferences. Chris Stein will assist this effort, first by getting into contact with Chiefs of Interpretation.

Shenandoah NP has hired Ms. Laura Cheek to work on wilderness education at that park and is willing to enter into an agreement with the national program office that will allow her to work with Diane Liggett (HFC) and the Program Manager on project work from the new Wilderness Education Plan.

Outcome: The Program Manager will follow up on the approval, reproduction, and distribution of approved Wilderness Education Plan. He will also work to develop a memo from the Director (or Deputy Director) to the parks announcing the availability and implementation of the plan. He will also develop the strategy and agreement with SHEN and HAFE to begin development of Plan components. This agreement will be reviewed at the next NWSC meeting.

NWSC Draft Charter: After the last meeting, the draft NWSC Committee Charter was sent to Regional Directors for review and comment. No comments were received. Several suggestions were made for improvements to the document; it was approved by the NWSC subject to the following changes.

- The words “management” will be replaced by “stewardship whenever a philosophical perspective is intended.
- Language will be added which identifies the Carhart Center and the Leopold Institute as ex-officio members of the National Wilderness Steering Committee.

Outcome: Program Manager will carry the Charter forward for signature by Associate Director, Operations and Education.

Program Reporting Survey/Database: The Program Manager provided an overview and handout of the DO 41 Program Reporting survey [designed as an intranet database system] with the Committee, stating that it is intended as a database that will be used for generating internal and external reports on the status of the program. As the Associate Director for Operations and Education noted previously, this is not intended as a device to address accountability. Committee members were asked to review the handout and provide the Program Manager with advice, corrections, and updates as soon as possible.

Outcome: Program Manager will work with the University of Montana Webmaster to complete the technical aspects of the internet site and have it available for in-Service use as early in 2002 as possible. The Wilderness Program office will continue providing oversight and accountability for the survey program. After the initial survey is completed [probably by phone interview to introduce parks to the site], very little annual maintenance of the database will be required. [Update: Project will not be started until the DOI Internet is reopened for government and public business.]

Revision of DO41 and RM41: The Program Manager reported that the Associate Director, Operations and Education indicated that the approved Director's Order 41: Wilderness Preservation and Management was longer than many other Director's Orders and might be made clearer. The ASD requested the Program Manager to attempt a shortening of the document and reorganize it to show the clear differences between line and staff responsibilities for wilderness stewardship across the National Park Service. The Program Manager provided the NWSC members with a draft of DO 41 that responded to the ASD request, asking them to provide feedback by November 1, 2001.

The "Management Issues" section of DO 41 is proposed to be shortened by some measure by more careful incorporation of concepts into other sections, but the Program Manager and Committee members concurred that it has great value if used for critical issues raised by the field. The Program Manager advised the group that the two "critical issues" he is working on in response to field needs: 1) updated guidance on the Wilderness Study Process (a requirement of law and policy related to newly acquired lands or lands not previously studied) which DSC planners have said is needed, and 2) the issue of rock bolting in Wilderness. A first draft of the Wilderness Study Process issue was circulated for review, but several drafts are likely.

Outcome: Committee members need to provide comments on all handouts to the Program Manager by November 1, 2001. It is anticipated that comments on the DO will be of an editorial and organizational nature and that the DO can proceed comparatively quickly toward a quick internal review. The Program Manager will follow up with the Policy Office on this topic. Substantive issues will require public review and need to proceed at a much different pace. [Update: New drafts of Management Issues on the wilderness study process and rock bolting will be on the agenda for the next NWSC meeting].

Website and Toolbox Development: Development of the RM 41 electronic “Wilderness Managers’ Toolbox is proceeding apace and may move to completion sooner as the Intermountain Intranet site is reorganized and data transfer problems between this site and the University of Montana’s www.wilderness.net are resolved. The Program Manager is hopeful that the Toolbox will be available to the Field early in CY 2002.

Outcome: Program Manager will continue working on the above project to make it operational as soon as possible. [Update: The DOI internet shutdown has temporarily halted work on this project.]

Wilderness Policy Council: Agency staffing changes have affected the operation of the Interagency Wilderness Policy Council. Three of the six members, comprised of top level managers, are new to the Committee and progress on the business of this group has consequently been slow. The unknown release date for the final Pinchot Institute Report on Wilderness Management has also hindered movement.

Outcome: Program Manager will work with Associate Director Ring and his interagency counterparts in an attempt to invigorate interagency policy discussions and action from the Council. A response to the Pinchot Report is still likely to dominate discussions, although other topics may include inventorying and monitoring standards and development of standards for “solitude.” [Update: The Wilderness Policy Council met December 14, and a report on their discussions will be circulated when the minutes become available. Major discussions focused on a) getting briefings on the Pinchot Report to agency leadership and assistant secretaries, and b) interagency agreement on how to proceed on the rock bolting issue.]

3. Status Reports from Deputy Program Manager. (J. Walters)

Wilderness Award Program: The Year 2000 award presentation ceremonies went well with separate events for the awards for the Joshua Tree National Monument staff and the Individual Champion of Wilderness Award. Superintendent Mary Martin was presented with the park group award at a Washington event attended by Deputy Director Galvin, and Associate Director’s Dick Ring, and Mike Soukup. Tim Devine received his “Individual Champion of Wilderness” award at a ceremony at Rocky Mountain National Park attended by Secretary Norton, Director Manilla, and the park staff. [Update: Photos and a write up for the presentations appeared in the subsequent edition of the DOI publication People, Land and Water.]

Outcome: Jim Walters will develop the call for nominations for the Year 2001 Director’s Wilderness Management and Stewardship Awards per a memorandum from the Director to

all wilderness parks. Target date for the call is early December, 2001. He will also continue working on coordinating appropriate venues for recipients of the Director's Wilderness Award. (There continue to be discrepancies concerning venues and nature for the various NPS award ceremonies.) The Program Manager/Deputy Program Manager will discuss the idea of a national interagency award comprised of the individual award winners from the respective agencies, with the other wilderness program leaders and then take it to the National Wilderness Policy Council if it is seen as possible and desirable.

Report on Intermountain Regional Wilderness Workshop: A report entitled: "Summary Report: National Park Service – Intermountain Region Wilderness Workshop" was distributed to Committee members. This report summarized the findings/conclusion of the May 1-2 meeting at Estes Park, Colorado attended by the IMR Directorate, park superintendents, and the regional environmental community. The Regional Director subsequently approved an element of the Workshop addressing the formation of an IMR Wilderness Executive Committee (IMR-WEC). The purpose of this group will be to provide advice and recommendations to the Directorate and parks on wilderness related issues. The draft charter for the IMR-WEC was recently approved by the IMR Directorate.

Outcome: J. Walters will begin forming the IMR-WEC by recruiting individual members to serve on the Committee, developing an agenda and scheduling the initial meeting.

NWSC Membership Rotation Schedule: The current Committee membership rotation schedule was distributed and is attached to this report (Attachment 1). There were several issues of concern. Alaska representative Dave Spirtes is scheduled to rotate off the Committee at the conclusion of the current meeting and action is needed to keep an Alaska superintendent on the committee. The larger problem is that since six new members joined the Committee at the May, 2001 meeting, there is a potential problem arising from the fact that up to half the Committee is scheduled to rotate off by the May, 2004 meeting.

Outcomes: Don Neubacher will talk with Regional Director Rob Amberger about retaining or replacing Dave Spirtes' on the Committee. Chairperson will work with Associate Director Ring and program managers to find ways to avoid the mass rotation of members. [Update: Randy Jones has moved to become Deputy Director, vacating his slot on the Committee. Dennis Davis is unexpectedly moving to IRM, Denver and will be reassigned into an at-large slot where he can continue to assist the Committee on Wilderness Performance goals. These positions will need to be re-advertised after discussion with the Chairperson.]

Wilderness Management Plan Subcommittee: After a general presentation of the May, 2001 draft template, the Committee concluded that a clearer structure and re-formatting would be necessary to convert this important and useful document into a more user-friendly

piece for use by field personnel. Hard copies of both versions of the document will be distributed to Committee members for review and comment.

Outcomes: Hard copies of both versions of the document will be mailed to Committee members by the end of October. Members need to review both versions and provide comments/suggestion by the end of December, 2001. J. Walters will formulate a review meeting to be attended by the writing sub-committee, environmental compliance staff from the DSC, and others. The goal will be to develop a final draft version of the document at a meeting (Las Vegas) to be held in early February 2002.

4. Reports from Carhart Institute and Leopold Research Institute.

A. Carhart Training Center Report (R. Potts representing Director Connie Myers)

Wilderness Stewardship Training Course:

Rick reported on the cancellation of the September Stewardship Training Course in Alaska due to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. This course has been re-scheduled for the last week of February/early March, 2002 near Tucson, Arizona. Participants at the Alaska course are being re-scheduled for the Tucson course. Unit courses will be offered this year at BLCA, CHIS, CUIS, SEKI, and possibly at CANY/ARCH.

The Carhart Training Center is currently scheduling an interagency planning course, a visitor use management course, and other specific interagency courses that have been funded for the remainder of this year and in 2002. There are currently openings for NPS participants at these courses and a better system of “beating the bushes” for suitable NPS candidates is needed. The recent changes to the Lotus Notes intra-communication network has caused considerable problems with bulletin boards and communications with broad mailing lists.

Outcomes: R. Potts will work with Deputy Program Manager to find ways to ensure that notices of wilderness training courses are being distributed to park managers.

B. Leopold Wilderness Research Institute Report (D. Parsons, Director)

A summary of current Leopold Institute staff efforts includes Dave Parson’s examination of fire use and restoration research; Dave Cole’s addressing visitor use, over utilization and impacts; Alan Watson’s studying visitor experience issues; Steve Corn’s study of amphibian declines; and Peter Landres’ development of natural resource monitoring protocols

Dave reported that the Institute appears to have above average funding this year because of an infusion of fire funding, but that the NPS continues to be the only agency that has provided no funding to the Institute. He also distributed a copy of the Leopold Center’s request for

establishing a National Learning Center at the Institute as general information to Committee members. It can be reviewed as Attachment 3 of this report.

Outcome: Information to Committee members

5. Cultural Resources and Wilderness (G. Somers/ D. Morris)

NWSC member Gary Somers presented these findings from his survey of cultural resource specialists and their perspectives on Cultural Resources and Wilderness issues:

“As the cultural resources representative on the committee, at the May 3-4, 2001 NWSC meeting in Denver I was assigned the task of canvassing cultural resource professionals around the country as the first step in drafting a position paper regarding cultural resources in wilderness. In July 2001 I sent a request to almost 30 people across the country, including those recommended by Kate Stevenson, asking for their thoughts, experience, suggestions, etc. concerning cultural resource issues in wilderness areas. I got responses from about half of those I contacted.

I have carefully read all of the responses and reread the Wilderness Act, relevant sections of Management Policies 2001, Directors Order 41 and Reference Manual 41. The following is a synopsis of what I found and the recommendations I have for the committee as a whole.

Findings from comments:

- a. There is a great deal of confusion between what the Wilderness Act actually says and what many people believe it says.
- b. The most consistent theme of all the comments I received was that many wilderness advocates believe the Wilderness Act “trumps” cultural resource laws.
- c. The second most consistent theme was that many wilderness advocates believe cultural resources, especially historic structures, do not belong in wilderness and either need to be removed or allowed to deteriorate through “benign neglect”.
- d. There are also cultural resource advocates who believe if the cultural resource laws don’t trump the Wilderness Act they at least “neutralize” it, especially when it comes to minimum requirement standards.
- e. There appears to be a great deal of “blending” and confusion concerning minimum requirement, minimum tool and primitive tool.
- f. In some parks it at least appears that it is the wilderness manager, and not the superintendent, who makes the decision under the minimum requirement decision tree as to whether or not prohibited uses and activities can be allowed on a case by case basis.

Conclusions from Reading NPS Management Policies and DO and RM 41:

- NPS policies do a good job of incorporating cultural resource requirements into the

management standards for wilderness areas. They accurately reflect the requirements of the Wilderness Act as well as the numerous pieces of cultural resource legislation, including the Antiquities Act, the Historic Sites Act, the National Historic Preservation Act and the Archeological Resources Preservation Act.

- The problems we are having between some wilderness advocates and some cultural resource advocates have more to do with personal interpretations of and selective application of parts of the Wilderness Act and other NPS policies than they do with the Act and policies themselves.

Recommendations:

- a. The position paper should restate and reinforce what the Wilderness Act and NPS policies already say about cultural resources in wilderness areas.
- b. It should put to rest the notion that the Wilderness Act “trumps” the cultural resource legislation or vice versa. All of these laws are part of our stewardship mandate and we must put our efforts into making them work in concert with one another.
- c. Since all wilderness areas contain cultural resources, all wilderness managers should receive training in cultural resource management. All cultural resource managers in parks that contain wilderness areas should receive training in wilderness management.
- d. Superintendents must clearly be the final decision makers when the minimum requirements decisions are made.

Outcome: The Committee thanked Gary Somers for his work on the survey and adopted his recommendations. He will develop this draft report into a service-wide “white-paper” for the NWSC that will be the basis for a memo to be issued jointly by Associate Director Stevens and Associate Director Ring. Gary will also explore possible recommendations for additions/changes to RM-41 that will complement this effort.

6. Pinchot Institute Report on Wilderness Management

The Committee generally discussed their understanding of the status of the Pinchot Report and its disposition. The consensus was that the Dr. Perry Brown appeared to consider the report as “completed” and there appeared to be no further room for discussion about format, content, etc. A copy of the current version of the document was not available at the meeting, so the Committee felt it was premature to begin drafting an agency response to the Report. Instead, the Committee “brainstormed” what they felt the agency and the program needed to do, regardless of the Report. These recommendations include:

NWSC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM WORKPLAN AND GOALS

Major Goals

- a. Foster Greater Support for the National Wilderness Preservation System
 - ❑ Secure stronger commitment from senior NPS Leadership for this purpose.
 - ❑ Enhance and support the NPS relationship with Wilderness Policy Council.
 - ❑ Conduct/join interagency policy analysis when needed for specific issues.
 - ❑ Foster/determine wilderness resource monitoring.
 - ❑ Foster greater accountability in wilderness management.
- a. Seek ways to accelerate wilderness planning
- b. Foster/develop better information and tools to deal with Minimum Requirements planning and analysis
- c. Promote/support educational activities related to Wilderness

Specific Action Items

- a. Wilderness Plan Template Development
 - ❑ Send out model plan for review and comment for 60 days by Committee; subcommittee to meet thereafter to complete final draft for formal review and ultimate inclusion in RM 41 guidance.
 - ❑ Work with Leadership to find a funding source for completing wilderness plans
 - ❑ Incorporate a minimum requirements section that will be a useful model for all wilderness parks.
- a. Wilderness Awards
 - ❑ Send out notice for 2001 Wilderness Award nominations.
 - ❑ Discuss an interagency award at with other agencies, and, if appropriate or necessary, with the Wilderness Policy Council.
- a. Director's Order and 41 Manual
 - ❑ Review DO/RM 41 and finalize per Associate Director instruction
 - ❑ Address any critical wilderness management issues for inclusion
- a. Wilderness Education Plan (When signed and reproduced)
 - ❑ Distribute directly to park superintendent and interpretation division chief.
 - ❑ Work to secure funding for interagency education specialist at Carhart.
 - ❑ Facilitate Wilderness Learning Center Proposal.
- a. Cultural Resources in Wilderness
 - ❑ Create and circulate position paper to NWSC on cultural resources in wilderness.
 - ❑ After NWSC approval, develop paper into memorandum to be jointly signed by Associate Directors for Cultural Resources and Operations.
- a. Pinchot Institute Report on Wilderness Management
 - ❑ Brief Director/Senior Leadership on content and recommendations of Report.
 - ❑ Develop a formal response to the Report for the Directorate at the next NWSC meeting that is ultimately targeted at a field audience.

- a. Enhance wilderness resource monitoring and evaluation.
 - ❑ Promote funding for wilderness research from NRPP and otherwise support science-based management of wilderness areas.
 - ❑ Develop policy/position paper on wilderness qualities that communicates how these areas are different from other park management zones.
- a. Complete Annual Wilderness Report [Report to Congress or NPS].
 - ❑ Develop a brief document that can be used as an educational or communications tool both in the Agency and beyond (Substitute for previous Annual Report to Congress) to showcase wilderness in the National Park Service.
 - ❑ Improve accountability for creating annual report from wilderness parks.
- a. Enhance ability of NPS to professionally manage wilderness.
 - ❑ Create a training program to address existing wilderness employee competencies. This is consistent with the individual park unit training course concept together with the idea of a train-the-trainer concept.
 - ❑ Integrate wilderness into existing competencies for other disciplines wherever possible; work with other NPS training staff.
 - ❑ Enhance wilderness websites to better assist field staff.
 - ❑ Expand external partnerships with interested constituent communities.
- a. Increase collaboration and cooperation between four wilderness agencies.
 - ❑ Make a greater effort to exchange information on case studies.
 - ❑ Explore/encourage interagency wilderness planning in those places where clusters of designated interagency wilderness areas exist.
 - ❑ Coordinate planning approach among agencies for minimum tool requirement.
 - ❑ Continue efforts to pursue greater policy consistency among agencies.
- a. Seek base funding for NPS position at the Leopold Wilderness Research Institute.
- b. Develop wilderness performance goal(s) for NPS Strategic Plan.

Outcome: Program Manager believes these are in consistent with the existing program and may represent the departure point for formally responding to the Pinchot Report. This is a useful synopsis and he, Jim Walters, and Rick Potts will move to implement these NWSC recommendations as part of the NPS Wilderness Program within the Operations and Education Directorate.

7. Wilderness GPRA Goals Discussion (R. Harris, GPRA Office - Denver)

Rick Harris provided the Committee with his perspectives concerning the integration of wilderness goals into national, regional, and park GPRA strategy plans. He felt wilderness should be reflected in the national strategy plan and goals should be written which measure: (1) wilderness conditions and (2) visitor satisfaction. Parks also need to complete their wilderness management plans and identify these projects as “0” goals in their individual plans. Subsequent discussion by members indicated that visitor satisfaction should reflect a knowledge and appreciation of wilderness values, including solitude, and could be based on physical measurements conducted by a trained observer.

Harris felt that it would be possible to include a wilderness goal in the 2003 National Strategy Plan, but the goal language would need to be provided to his office soon.. Goals would need to reflect measurable indicators. He also stated that his office already has language for completing wilderness plans which could be integrated in the “0” goal for park strategy plans.

Outcomes: An NPS/interagency group will convene in Missoula, Montana on January 9-10 in an effort to formulate Wilderness Performance goals for integration into the next NPS Strategic Plan. Update: The group met and they were successful in articulating several wilderness performance goals for wilderness. The goals and the meeting report will be circulated to the NWSC as soon as they become available. It was an impressive group from an agency and interagency perspective—but a special thanks need to go to NWSC members Don Neubacher, Dave Morris and Steve Ulvi for making it successful.

8. Natural Resources Subcommittee Report. (D. Graber, D. Parsons, R.Potts)

A general discussion addressed the need to develop better guidance related to wilderness and natural resource issues including: how and when it is appropriate to manipulate natural processes in wilderness, coordinating the current fire “interface” initiative to avoid impacts, standards for permitting research, wildlife control, distinguishing appropriate monitoring (how is monitoring in wilderness different from other resource monitoring?), distinguishing the difference between “wildness” and “naturalness,” and the need to finalize the OFS funding request to support NPS commitments at the Aldo Leopold Institute. Dr. Schmidt emphasized the need for inter-divisional coordination in each of these programs.

Outcomes: Dave Graber will work on white-papers addressing ecological restoration (including fire) and distinguishing wilderness monitoring from other resource monitoring. Dave will solicit other members for this writing project. Committee members need to review the OFS funding package and provide comments to Dave Morris or Don Neubacher. Don will work with the Program Manager to integrate the OFS request into the funding system.

9. Wilderness in the National Park System – A Perspective From the Environmental Community. (D. Scott, Policy Director, PEW Wilderness Center)

Evening session 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. Doug presented a talk on the history of the Wilderness Act, the interaction of the U.S. Forest Service with the NPS, the politics leading up to the Act, and the reasons the NPS originally opposed the Wilderness Act. Doug continued his discussion the following morning emphasizing that the establishment, and

preservation of wilderness “character” was paramount in the Wilderness Act. Interested individuals may wish to obtain a copy of **A WILDERNESS-FOREVER FUTURE**, a Pew Wilderness Center Research Report that provides a short history of the National Wilderness Preservation System (www.pewwildernesscenter.org) (A further perspective on wilderness that may be of interest to NPS is offered at www.srs.fs.fed.us/trends).

10. Minimum Requirement (J. Walters/R. Potts)

Jim Walters discussed the implications of Section 4 (c) of the Wilderness Act and the problems the NPS continues to have in understanding, and applying minimum requirement protocols. After some discussion, the Committee agreed to consider using the draft interagency (Carhart) Minimum Requirement Decision Guide as the basic format to be included within NPS policies, director’s orders, and the wilderness management plan template. Rick Potts reported that the draft Carhart model was being shortened because many reviewers considered it unnecessarily long and a bit intimidating. The Committee will review the final when it become available, and if in agreement, will proceed as discussed. The Committee noted that parks still have the prerogative of adopting other suitable minimum requirements decision tools or modifying any other decision tool to meet their individual needs.

Outputs: Rick Potts will continue working with the Carhart Center to finalize their minimum requirement decision tool. After NWSC review, it will be integrated into appropriate references within director’s orders and reference manuals. Rick Potts will also take the lead in producing a white paper addressing minimum requirements analysis and the perceived problem of NPS staff to readily defaulting to the use of motorized equipment and/or helicopters within wilderness. The goal will be to foster better minimum requirements decisionmaking. Jim Walters, Don Sharlow, and Dave Graber also volunteered to assist in the development of the white paper.

12. Development of the Agency/Annual Report to Congress. (W. Henry)

The Program Manager led a general discussion addressing what needs to be or should be included in an NPS or Annual Wilderness Report. This discussion included the desirability of coordinating the report with the other agencies. After considering the history of attempting to generate the multi-agency report, it was concluded that the NPS should proceed with its own report and other agencies could join in as they wished to do so. The Committee suggested that the NPS Annual Report should:

- ❑ Be very brief (10 pages or less); make it attractive, informative, and educational. Begin with a cover letter from the Director. Use lots of pictures and graphics.
- ❑ Contain a concise background including the essence of the Wilderness Act, tabulated data

on wilderness acreage's, of parks, administrative designations (designated, recommended, etc.) with annual changes highlighted, information on values (Cordell Report), economic values, organization charts, wilderness performance measures, etc.

- ❑ Discuss status of National Park Service Wilderness including condition, status of policies, commercial services, visitor use data, status of plans, threats to wilderness, research, etc.
- ❑ Contain a statement of annual accomplishments (training, acres potential wilderness conversions, wilderness awards numbers, Carhart Center/Leopold Institute highlights and accomplishments of which the National Park Service should be aware.
- ❑ Contain a section on “next steps,” i.e., recommendations, needs.
- ❑ Be released within 6 months of the end of the fiscal year—March.

Outcomes: Program Manager will continue work integrating the above recommendations into the production of an NPS Annual Report.

13. Field Trip to Bandelier National Monument. (Noon until 6:00 p.m.)

The Committee membership drove to Bandelier National Monument to inspect the vegetative rehabilitation project proposed within the park's designated wilderness. The group was hosted by Superintendent Dennis Vazques. Dr. Craig Allen, Research Ecologist, U.S.G.S. Mid-continent Ecological Science Center, gave a slide presentation on the re-habilitation project including a description of the “problem” and on-going research addressing potential solutions. The group subsequently hiked to the to Frijole Canyon rim and inspected rehabilitation test plots and monitoring facilities. The project represents a significant modification of the existing vegetation inventory and includes use of motorized equipment within wilderness. It has implications for other park wilderness areas.

Outcomes: The NWSC compliments Superintendent Vazques and Dr. Allen for their careful approach to this project while challenging them to be mindful of maintaining wilderness character in this process. The NWSC will monitor this project and review the environmental impact statement being prepared by the park. It ties closely to the work of the NWSC natural resources subcommittee.

14. Date, Location, and Scope of Next NWSC Meeting.

- ❑ The Committee agreed that the NWSC should plan to meet at or near a park that has wilderness issues which could be reviewed and assessed (per the invitation of the park staff). It was the consensus of the Committee that it is appropriate for the NWSC take a more active role in providing advice and guidance to parks regarding wilderness issues. Ideas for the next meeting include:
- ❑ day use issues, including how to deal with groups missed in business licensing and

- commercial use permitting process (e.g. boy scouts, etc)
- ❑ Appropriateness of bridges within wilderness
- ❑ New technology issues
- ❑ Standards for research permits in wilderness
- ❑ Natural sounds within wilderness (Bernie Krause)
- ❑ Ecological restoration issues
- ❑ How should wilderness be integrated into the GMP process?
- ❑ What is the “end point” of the wilderness study process?
- ❑ SHEN Wilderness Education Agreement
- ❑ Wilderness adjacent to roads—how close?
- ❑ Update on access issues

Outcome: The next NWSC meeting is scheduled for April 16-17, 2002 at Point Reyes National Seashore, California. Jim Walters will coordinate logistics with Don Neubacher. Wes Henry will canvass parks for wilderness “issues” and circulate these to Committee members. They will also contact Bernie Krause concerning the possibility of presenting a natural sounds talk at the meeting. Committee members need to send other ideas and suggestions to Wes as soon as possible. Bob Siebert will contact Dr. Dave Cole for background information on day-use data.

15. Wilderness Case Study: Wilderness Management at Cumberland Island National Seashore. (D. Davis)

Denis Davis, former superintendent at CUIS, presented a slideshow discussion of the numerous political and resource issues affecting the management of the designated wilderness at the national seashore.

Outcome: Informational. The Committee also needs to remain apprised of current efforts to complete a wilderness management plan at the national seashore and be prepared to offer advice and assistance as requested.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:00 a.m. October 18, 2001

ATTACHMENT 1

NWSC MEMBERSHIP ROTATION SCHEDULE

(BASED ON 3-YEAR ROTATION SCHEDULE IDENTIFIED IN COMMITTEE CHARTER)

OCTOBER, 2001

<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE EOD</u>	<u>PROJECTED ROTATION DATE</u>
Denis Davis	5/01	5/04
Dave Graber	5/01	5/04
Dave Morris	5/01	5/04
Don Neubacher	5/00	5/03
Don Sharlow	4/00	5/03
Bob Siebert	5/00	5/03
Dave Spirtes	11/98	10/01
Gary Somers	5/01	5/04
Chris Stein	5/01	5/04
Steve Ulvi	5/01	5/04

Standing

AOD-Operations and Education

Wes Henry, WASO Wilderness Program Coordinator

Jim Walters, Deputy Wilderness Program Coordinator

ATTACHMENT 2
NWSC CHARTER

ATTACHMENT 3

NAME OF CENTER: *National Wilderness Learning Center*

PROPOSED PARKS: This is a multi-regional proposal for a national learning center, submitted through the Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (RM-CESU) in partnership with the Intermountain, Pacific West, and Alaska Regions. The National Wilderness Learning Center (NWLC) has been designed to emphasize park, regional and national level issues regarding the theme of wilderness preservation. Collaboration with other funded and proposed Learning Centers is central to the NWLC.

JUSTIFICATION: Increased national visibility, regional- and park-level issues and concerns, and legal challenges associated with the management of NPS wilderness (e.g., see IMRO Director's letter on the need for improved wilderness management and accountability) underscore the need for the NPS to apply scientific knowledge to management and policy decisions (86% of NPS lands are, by law or policy, currently managed as wilderness). The fact that many of the most pressing issues have common themes that cannot be effectively addressed on the local level has led to the coordinated submission of this proposal for a National Wilderness Learning Center. The major goal of the NWLC is to establish national priorities for research and information gathering on wilderness preservation with park and region input. The NWLC will work to reduce the backlog of wilderness research, information and education needs.

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PROPOSED LOCATION: The NWLC will be hosted by and co-located with the RM-CESU on the campus of the University of Montana (UM), in Missoula. This location will take advantage of the abundant national wilderness research and education resources already present in Missoula. These include the interagency Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute (Leopold Institute) and Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center (Carhart Center), as well as the University of Montana's Wilderness Institute. The RM-CESU fosters partnerships to conduct research, education, and technical assistance designed to improve the scientific base for managing ecosystems in the Rocky Mountains. In addition, the RM-CESU has identified wilderness as its one national theme (Strategic Plan, theme A6: "The RM-CESU participates in national programs for providing both the science necessary for wilderness and education and training for its continued stewardship") (see attached plan).

DESCRIPTION OF CENTER: The University of Montana (UM) campus, the Leopold Institute and Carhart Center have office space available for the NWLC and is ready to go. This space also can be used by visiting research and education specialists, as well as NPS employees interested in spending time developing projects or learning about regional and national wilderness issues. Such researchers/managers would be provided office space by one of the partners so they could benefit from interaction and collaboration with staff at the RM-CESU, Leopold Institute, Carhart Center, and UM. The NWLC will connect scientists, managers, and educators with other NPS learning centers or with specific parks or groups of parks where they can conduct studies. Facilities for visiting specialists are currently available at the Leopold Institute, the Carhart Center, and UM. All three entities have office space available with the associated infrastructure (computer support, phone, photocopying, mail, etc.). The UM School of Forestry, host of both the Wilderness Institute and the RM-CESU, has apartments available for visitors.

Operating in conjunction with a national steering committee (made up of parks, I&M networks, regions and other partners), the NWLC staff will catalog and synthesize existing wilderness-related research needs, prioritize research and resource management needs, identify common themes, facilitate and coordinate research projects, promote wilderness education opportunities, identify and pursue funding opportunities, and provide seed money for wilderness research and education projects.

As a priority, the NWLC will connect researchers interested in wilderness issues with network- or park- based learning centers and parks that have specific research needs and/or resources available for visiting scientists. The NWLC will also clarify the relationship between research needs identified by functional resource areas (e.g., biology, air, soils, fire, social sciences) and their relevance to sustaining park ecosystems in accordance with wilderness legislation and policy. The NWLC will have a prominent role in working with parks to assure that relevant scientific information is included in the wilderness management planning process.

In addition to providing a physical location where researchers, managers and educators interested in wilderness issues can coordinate their activities, the NWLC will have a strong web-based component to facilitate education and outreach. Web development for the NWLC will take advantage of the existing infrastructure that hosts the Wilderness Information Network at UM. Major web development will occur during the first two years with NWLC funding, and then be maintained with annual funding and through partner relationships or private grants. The education/outreach function of the NWLC will be enhanced by collaboration with the UM Earth Observing System Education Project, a NASA-funded program designed to make geospatial data available to researchers, students and the public.

The NWLC will hire two professional staff, a research coordinator and an education/outreach specialist who will be co-hosted by the RM-CESU, the Leopold Institute, and the Carhart

Center. All three units occur in proximity to each other on the UM campus. This arrangement will enhance the ability of Learning Center staff, as well as other NPS managers, to access Leopold Institute scientists, the Leopold Institute's Research Application Program, and Carhart Center training specialists with expertise in addressing wilderness issues. This collaboration will encourage Leopold Institute and Carhart Center staffs to more accurately focus on NPS wilderness research and education needs and opportunities. The Leopold Institute and the Carhart Center will provide the infrastructure support associated with office space, as well as limited administrative support. NWLC staff will be supervised by the Intermountain Region, through the NPS Research Coordinator at UM.

The staff will be provided with adequate travel funds to allow for collaboration with parks and regions nationwide. During the first two years of Center funding considerable resources will go into web site development; in the "out years" NWLC funds will be added to the RM-CESU contribution for "seed money" for small grants to researchers and graduate students to work on wilderness research and education projects in parks. The Leopold Institute will likely provide leveraged funds for this purpose.

The 5-year budget is specified in the following table:

	FY03	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07
Personnel ¹	\$140K	\$140K	\$140K	\$140K	\$140K
Infrastructure/travel ²	\$40K	\$40K	\$40K	\$40K	\$40K
Web expenses ³	\$65K	\$65K	\$20K	\$20K	\$20K
Seed money ⁴	\$15K	\$15K	\$60K	\$60K	\$60K
<u>Total</u>	\$260K	\$260K	\$260K	\$260K	\$260K

¹ NPS salary for research coordinator and education/outreach coordinator

² NPS travel and support (\$20K); in-kind support from Leopold Institute (\$12K) and Carhart Center (\$8K)

³ Support of hardware, software, and webmaster

⁴ Seed money for local/regional wilderness research and education projects (\$45K in out-years); NPS RM-CESU (\$15K); additional funds provided by Leopold Institute and Carhart Center as available

The goal of the NWLC will be to establish long-term partnerships with the Pew Wilderness Center, with the mission of "protecting America's wilderness by educating people about the wilderness ideal" and the Turner Foundation, with grants related to protecting water, improving air quality, and protecting biodiversity through habitat preservation. Early discussions with these entities are promising.

FOCUS OF CENTER : The NWLC will provide an effective mechanism for parks, regions, and other NPS learning centers to work with national experts in wilderness research and education. The Center will also establish a mechanism for reducing the backlog of research needs already established in the Project Management Data System (PMIS). The application of current scientific information to management decisions and the communication of findings and programs to the broader public are critical to the long term support and sustainability of wilderness parks.

An initial emphasis for the NWLC will be to work with their national steering committee, CESUs and regional groupings of parks to help identify the wilderness-specific issues and needs (both research and education) that parks and regions will need to address in their future management planning and practices. A recent Leopold Institute-driven prototype of this approach has proven highly successful for identifying research issues and needs in the Alaskan parks, including drawing the attention of groups such as the Association of Circumpolar Universities and the National Science Foundation. This approach will be used in other NPS regions during the first years of the NWLC to set priorities and define needs.

The research and education programs of the NWLC will focus on issues related to the understanding and management of park wilderness that can best be addressed on a regional or national level. Listed here are some of the regional and/or national issues to importance to parks: development and evaluation of use management strategies (including allocation of types of use – day vs. overnight, hiker vs. stock, commercial vs. private – on land and rivers), the appropriateness and consequences of manipulative restoration in wilderness (including vegetation, fire, fauna and recreation impacts), identification of experiences, values and expectations of wilderness users and the public at large (including views towards use regulations), interactions of subsistence activities and wilderness designation (especially in Alaska), and impacts of recreation and science activities in wilderness.

These issues are critical to the wilderness planning efforts now underway in most NPS wilderness parks, as they are prominent on the radar screens of park managers and organizations interested in parks and their management. The NWLC education efforts will use information collected in park wilderness to enhance public understanding of the value of wilderness. Through NWLC efforts, the public will gain an appreciation for the science behind wilderness management decisions as well as the value of wilderness to the scientific community. The NWLC education/outreach coordinator will work with the Wilderness Education Consortium of agencies and non-government organizations to help the public understand and appreciate the benefits of wilderness. The NWLC education coordinator will incorporate research findings into key messages about the ecological, social, and cultural values of park wilderness.

PARTNERSHIPS

This proposal details the importance of the central partnerships with the RM-CESU (and its member universities and agencies), Leopold Institute, Carhart Center, and UM. In addition,

the NWLC will work closely with park-based learning centers, regional offices, other CESUs, and parks to coordinate efforts. Other science and research partners include the USGS (with science staff located at UM, Montana State Univ., the Leopold Institute and Glacier NP), other federal wilderness research groups (USDA-FS, BLM and FWS), the Nature Conservancy, selected science funding agencies (NSF, EPA) and non-governmental organizations (Wilderness Watch, Wilderness Society). Education/outreach partners include the NPS-Natural Resource Information Division, the Wilderness Information Network, the UM Wilderness Institute, the University of Idaho Wilderness Institute, the EOS Education Project and the Wilderness Education Consortium.

Expressions of support for the NWLC have come from NPS regions, wilderness parks and other funded/proposed Learning Centers. Regions with particular interest in this Center are the Intermountain, Pacific West and Alaska. Wilderness and Learning Center parks who are supporting the concept of the NWLC and have, in some cases, offered to share facilities include: Glacier, Rocky Mountain, Acadia, Denali, Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Canyonlands and Sequoia-Kings Canyon NPs, Point Reyes NS, the Greater Yellowstone Network (Yellowstone, Grand Teton and Bighorn Canyon) and the North Coast and Cascades Network (Olympic, North Cascades and Mount Rainier NPs). See attached letters for details of this support. Private funding groups who will be contacted for leveraged funds include: Turner Foundation, Pew Trust, the Grand Teton Natural History Association, the National Parks Foundation, and Yellowstone Foundation.